recently invited applications from existing empanelled suppliers and from other reputed suppliers for supply of stationery items on regular basis;

(b) if so, the details of stationery items required to be supplied with terms and conditions of such supplies;

(c) whether All Government Offices including Public Sector Undertakings are purchasing stationery items from Super Bazar and Kendriya Bhandar;

(d) whether supplies of stationery items by Kendriya Bhandar and the Super Bazar is qualitative according to requird specifications and also at competitive rates avoiding any nexus between purchasing officials and suppliers;

(e) whether State Banks of India is a Government Undertaking;

(f) whether Government propose to ask S.B.I. and other Public Sector Banks to make their purchase of stationery items only from Super and Kendriya Bhandar in future; and

(g) if so, the details thereof and if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI M.V. CHANDRASHEKHAR MURTHY): (a) to (g) The information is being collected and will be laid on the Table of the House.

Decline in Level of Rupee

2288. SHRI G.Y. KRISHNAN: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the rupee dropped to a new low on 3.3.1995, when it touched Rs. 32.15 per dollar;

(b) whether the Rupee again took a drubbing against the dollar on the 7th March when it plunged to Rs. 32.5 per dollar;

(c) if so, the reasons for the decline;

(d) how far will it take the Rupee to come back to its formal level of Rs. 31.37 to a dollar; and

(e) what steps Government have taken or propose to take to ensure that the Rupee does not plunge further particularly in the background of dollar having hit historic lows against the D.M. and Japanese Yen on the 8th March?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI M.V. CHANDRASHEKHAR MURTHY): (a) and (b). In terms of FEDAI (indicative) rates (average of buying and selling rates), the exchange rate of the rupee depreciated to Rs. 31.90 per U.S. dollar on March 3, 1995 and to Rs. 31.97 per U.S. dollar on March 7, 1995.

(c) to (e) The exchange rate is market determined. The Rupee strengthened to Rs. 31.5200 per U.S. dollar on March 16, 1995 with increased inflow of foreign exchange.

India's Narcotics Control Programme

2289. SHRI G.Y. KRISHNAN: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether, while giving a "clean chit to Pakistan on the basis of national security reasons, the USA has called upon India to take more aggressive enforcement measures to demonstrate greater resolve at the highest level to counter narcotics trafficking and addictions;

(b) if so, the reasons which led the US Government to find serious limitations in the Governemnt of India's narcotics control programme; and

(c) what is Governemnt's reaction thereto?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI M.V. CHANDRASHEKHAR MURTHY): (a) to (c) The foreign Assistance Act, 1961 of the U.S.A. required the U.S. President to submit to the Congress a determination of counter drug cooperation of major drug producers or drug transit countries. Decertification can be waived, even if a country may not have fully cooperated, if the U.S. President determines that it is in U.S.A.'s national interest to do so. India's is a